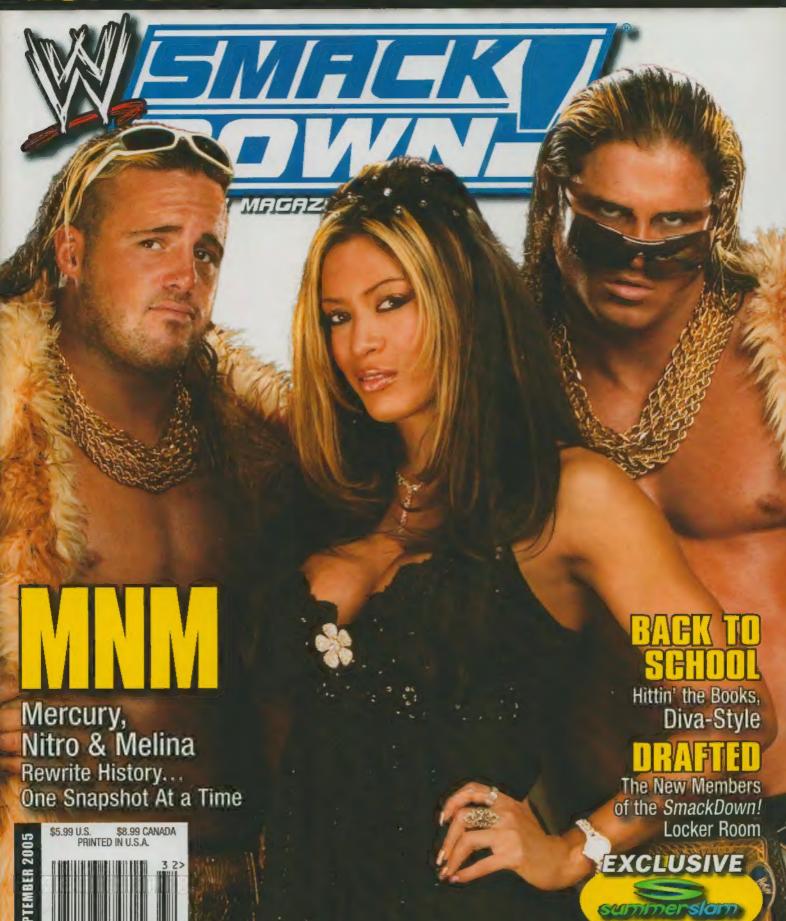
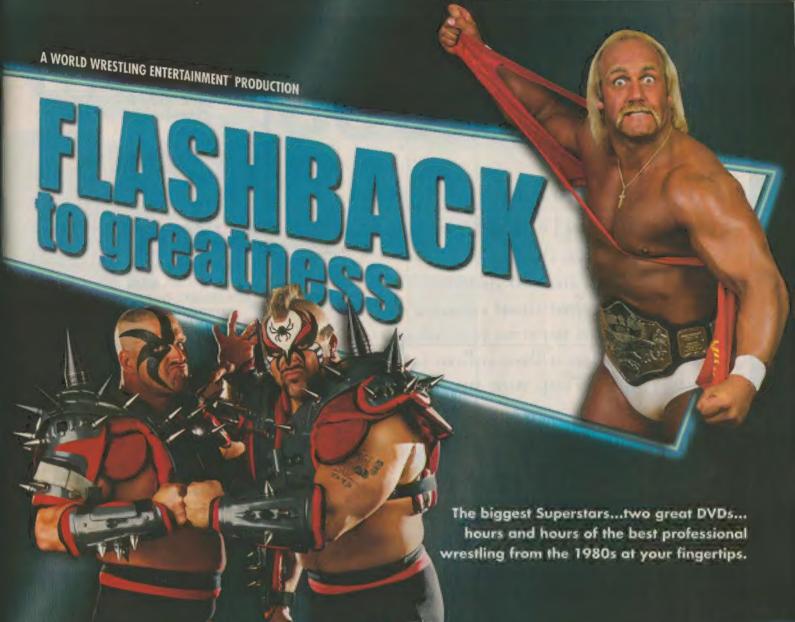
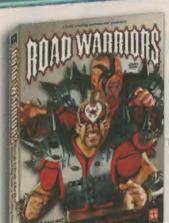
HOT TORRIE WILSON POSTER INSIDE!



PICTORIAL





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le this 2-Disc DVD, the stemming journey unfable, from their exspicious debet in the early 1980s to the tragic death of Michael "Herek" Hogstreed in 2003. Ride along with the Road Warriers' most momorable bouts, interviews, said moses.

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Live Events & Superstars' Birthdays

		SEPTE	MBER			
				1	2	Augusta, GA 7:30 p.m.
4 Масол, GA 7:00 р.т.	5 Albany, GA 7:00 p.m.	6 Atlanta, GA SmackDown! 7:30 p.m.	7	8	9	10 MATT MORGAN
11 Springfield, MO 7:00 p.m.	12 Wichita, KS 7:00 p.m.	13 Tulsa, OK SmackDown! 7:30 p.m.	14	15 THEODORE R. LONG	16	17 Waco, TX 7:30 p.m.
18 Tyler, TX 3.00 p.m.	Amarillo, TX 7:00 p.m.	Lubbock SmackDown! 7:30 p.m.	21	22	23	24 Dothan, AL 7:30 p.m.
25 Mobile, AL 7:00 p.m.	26 Lafayette, LA 7:00 p.m.	27 New Orleans, LA SmackDown! 7:30 p.m.	28	29	30	





CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Tracey Thomas

EDITORIAL

Managing Editor: Brian Solemon Copy Chief: Michael Chiappetta Copy Editor: Kevin Caldwell Senior Staff Writers: Keith Elliot Greenberg,

Jeremy Brown

Contributing Superstar Writer: Heldenreich

Art Directors: Dan Trombetto, Chris Delisle Associate Art Director: Dmitriy Ostrovskiy

PHOTOGRAPHY

Director of Photography: Noelle Carr Senior Photography Editor: Frank Vitucel Photography Editor: Meg Kuhta Assistant Photography Editor: Meg Reinhardt Senior Staff Photographer: John Giamundo Contributing Photographers: Rich Freeda, Craig Ambrosio, Craig Melvin, David Gunn, Henry DiRocco

Photography Assistant: Denise Cubbins

DPERATIONS

Production Manager: Elizabeth McCollum Business Manager: Ed Gager

ADVERTISING SALES

Director, Integrated Sales: David Cohn. Account Executives: Jamie Paul Seymour, John DiCostanza

Phone: 212-593-2228 e-mall: wweadsales@wwe.com

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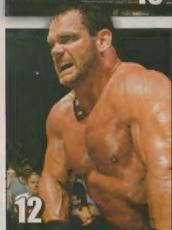
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20 Bigger Than Elvis

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30 Summer Memories

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E-mail us at: sdmag@wwe.com • Fax us at: 203-353-2855 Write us at: SmockDown! Magazine, c/o Managing Editor, P.O. 8ox 3859, Stamford, CT 06905

All-American Giri

Dear Editor,

I loved the article on Torrie Wilson in the July issue of SmackDown! Magazine ("Torrie's Story"). It was interesting to hear about her career. And she is the hottest Diva on SmackDown! I also loved the story on Eddie Guerrero ("Why, Eddie, Why?" by Jeremy Brown). I think Eddie is right. I like what he's been doing these past couple of months. It reminds me of the old Eddie Guerrero I used to see.

Sunny Days Ahead for London

Dear Editor.

Props to Jeremy Brown for the article on Paul London in the June issue ("London's Burning"). There is no doubt in my mind that London is one of the most talented Superstars on SmackDown! I've been amazed with every match I've seen him in. London truly rocks. I'd love to see more of him in SmackDown! Magazine soon, hopefully a cover story, interview or poster. Thanks again for the article!

Buck Pelletier

North Haven, CT

"Chain Gang" Follows Cena Anywhere He Goes

Dear Editor,

I would like to thank you for putting John Cena on the cover of the June issue of SmackDown! Magazine. Even though John Cena was drafted over to Row, I still am glad that he was on the cover. When I saw that issue, I instantly grabbed it and bought it. I really loved the stories on him. I really think that even though he hasn't been in WWE as long as others have, he deserves this fame more than a lot of other WWE Superstars. He has had the U.S. Championship twice and currently has the WWE Championship. He has an incredible amount of "Chain Gang" members, including me. He has definitely taken the wrestling world by storm. I am very glad that you recognized all his talents (wrestling, rapping, acting, etc.) and I am glad that he is here to stay!

> Ashley Meyer Via E-Mail

McCool Gaining New Fans

Dear Editor,

I enjoyed Michelle McCool's article and pictorial in your June issue ("The Pride of Palatka"). Out of all the new Divas, Michelle is my favorite by far. She's beautiful, athletic, and has proven that she is able to stand up to veteran Divas such as Dawn Marie. And at the risk of sounding completely cheesy, her name may be McCool, but she is totally McHot!

Shane Ramey Via E-Mail

[Editor's Note: Don't worry, Shane, that wasn't cheesy at all... Nope, no sir, not one bit ...]



SummerSlam: The Heat is Back

It all started 17 years ago—appropriately enough, at the mecca of sports-entertainment, Madison Square Garden. WWE was engulfed in the red-hot rivalry between the Mega-Powers, the duo of WWE Champion "Macho Man" Randy Savage & former champion Hulk Hogan, and the Mega-Bucks, the duo of "Million-Dollar Man" Ted DiBiase & "The Eighth Wonder of the World," Andre the Giant.

It was the summer of 1988, and these four Superstars were locked in a bitter feud. To allow their greatest battle to be seen by the largest audience possible, WWE instituted a new pay-perview spectacular, its third to date. The new event would be called SummerSiam. WWE would never be the same.

In its early years, SummerSlam carried with it the slogan, "Feel the Heat!" Never has there been a better fitting catchphrase, as SummerSlam played host to some of the wildest, most unpre-

dictable, intense wars ever waged in a WWE ring. It was at SummerSlam that the Hulkster finally went head-to-head with his movie nemesis, Zeus; that Undertaker fought to expose the fraud of Ted DiBiase's imposter Undertaker; that Stone Cold Steve Austin and 'Taker met at the end of the "Highway to Hell"; that The Rock put his title on the line against a brash rookie, Brock Lesnar; that Kane first defeated Matt Hardy to win the reluctant hand of Lita.

There's a reason that many fans consider SummerSiam to be WWE's second-biggest annual pay-per-view event, right behind WrestleMania. Survivor Series built its legend originally on tag-team elimination matches. Royal Rumble is headlined by its own unique 30-man match of the same name. But, just like WrestleMania, each and every year SummerSiam has brought you pure competition. It's a classic formula that's yielded some undeniably incredible results.

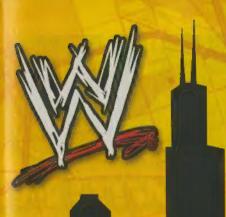
Washington, D.C. will play host to the 18th annual edition of SummerSlam, an event that is sure to live up to the proud tradition of unparalleled excitement and non-stop action. Audiences the world over will "feel the heat" once again as the Superstars of both Raw and SmackDown! take to the ring to settle their grievances the WWE way.

And just as the Hulkster & Macho Man made history all those years ago, so too will the Superstars of today write their names in the annals of SummerSlam history. They will focus all their energy on that one blockbuster event to make sure that what they do on that day will live on always in the minds of all who see it.

I leave you with the words of the great Mohandas Gandhi:

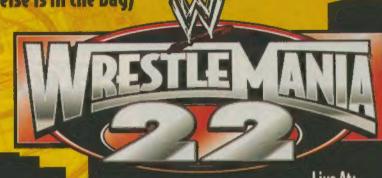
"I have learned through bitter experience the one supreme lesson to conserve my anger, and as heat conserved is transmitted into energy, even so our anger controlled can be transmitted into a power that can move the world."





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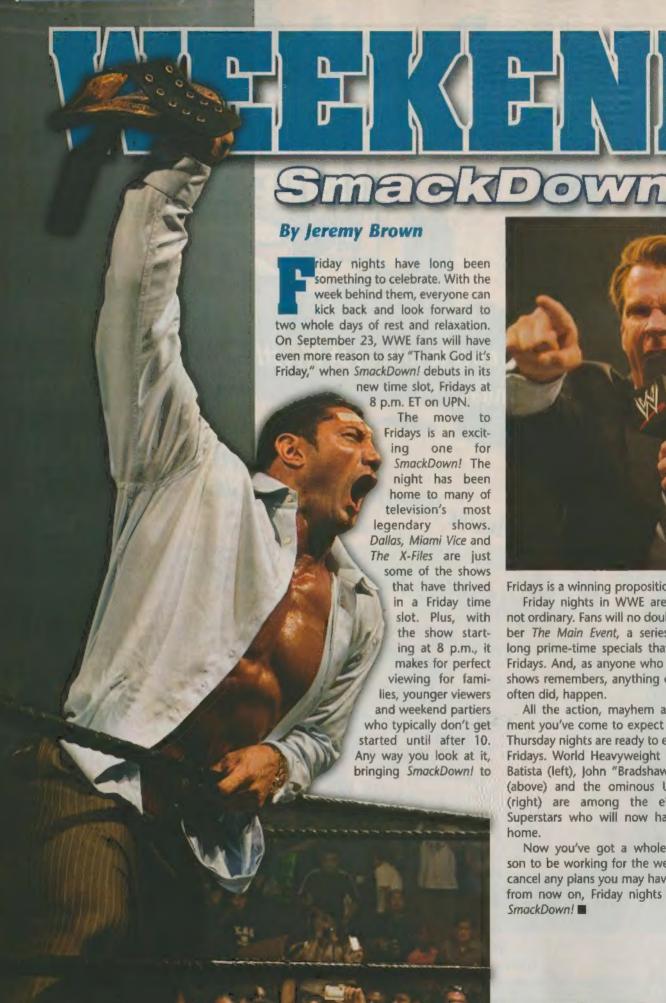
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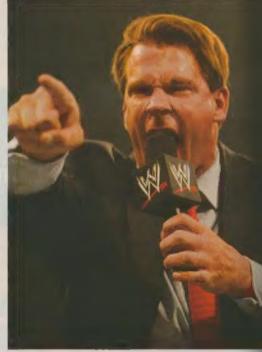
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For more information, log on to WWE.com or send an e-mail request to wrestlemania.packages@wwe.com



We look forward to having you join us at the most exciting and spectacular WrestleMania weekend of all time!





Fridays is a winning proposition.

Friday nights in WWE are definitely not ordinary. Fans will no doubt remember The Main Event, a series of hourlong prime-time specials that aired on Fridays. And, as anyone who saw those shows remembers, anything could, and often did, happen.

All the action, mayhem and excitement you've come to expect from your Thursday nights are ready to explode on Fridays. World Heavyweight Champion Batista (left), John "Bradshaw" Layfield (above) and the ominous Undertaker (right) are among the elite WWE Superstars who will now have a new

Now you've got a whole new reason to be working for the weekend. So cancel any plans you may have. Because from now on, Friday nights belong to SmackDown!

oves to Fridays on UPN



GOOD FRIDAY

By coming to Fridays, SmackDown! joins a long list of successful shows that have made their homes on the first night of the weekend. Here's a look at a few other notable Friday hits.

Rawhide - Clint Eastwood's cowboy adventure debuted in January 1959 on Fridays, and it went on to run for five seasons.

The Flintstones – Until The Simpsons, this B.C.-era answer to The Honeymooners was the longest running prime-time animated series in TV history.

The Brady Bunch – America's favorite family made their home on Fridays during their entire TV run from 1969 to 1973.

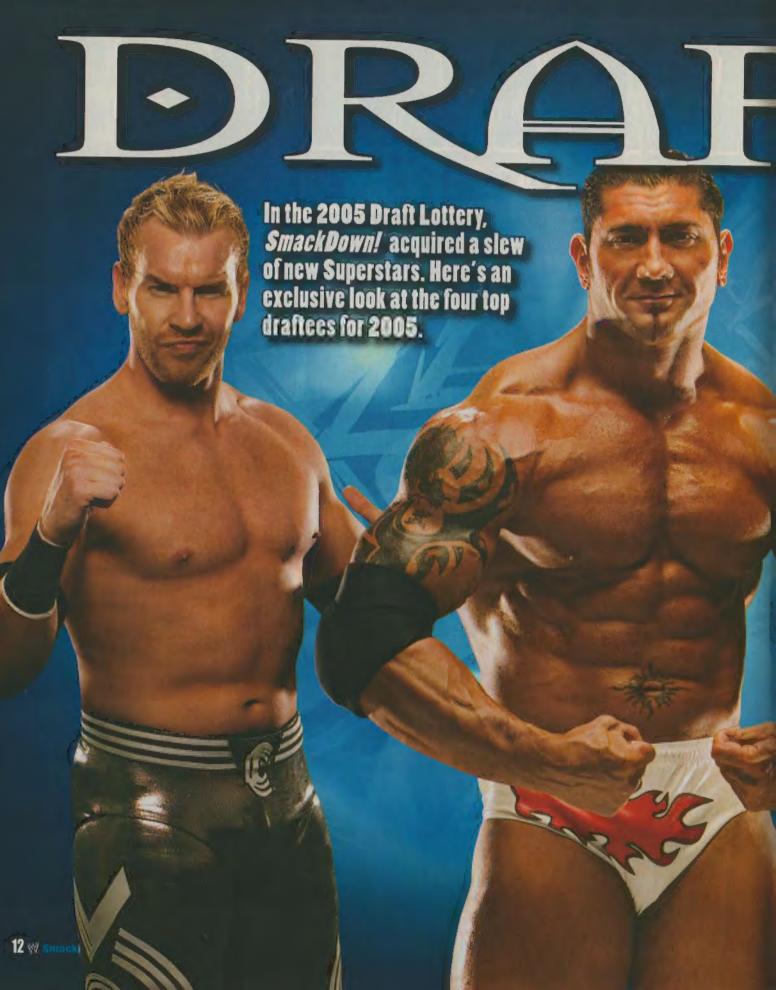
The Dukes of Hazzard – The Duke boys tore it up for seven seasons, barreling along the back roads of Hazzard County every Friday night.

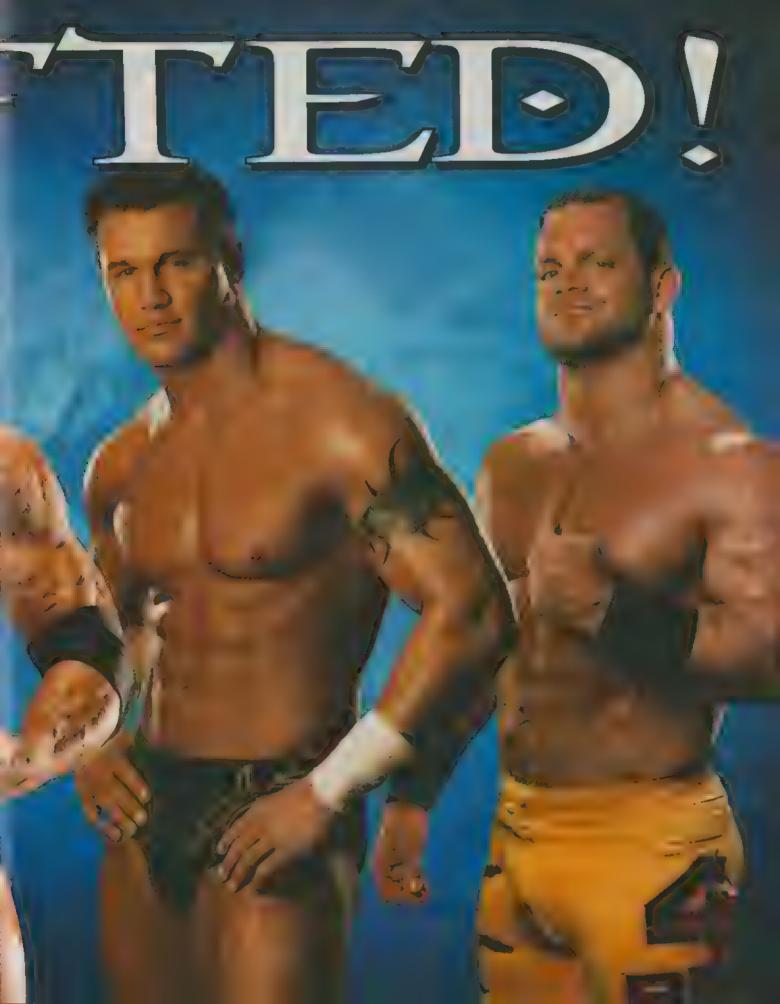
Miami Vice - This sun-soaked cop drama made teal T-shirts and unshaven faces into the hip styles of the time. It also helped make Don Johnson "Mr. Friday Night."

Knight Rider – Lots of guys had cool cars in the '80s, but it's safe to say that David Hasselhoff had the coolest. Hasselhoff and his trusty car, KITT, became staples of NBC's Friday lineup and ruled in the ratings for four seasons.

Dallas – Although it began its run on a Sunday, it was on Friday nights that this prime-time soap really took off. It became the most popular series on network television, and the resolution of the "Who shot J.R.?" cliffhanger remains one of the mostwatched events in TV history.

The X-Files – At the time of its debut, there were very few dramas to keep older audiences home on Friday nights. The paranormal adventures of FBI agents Fox Mulder and Dana Scully changed all of that, making Fridays the night to stay home.







Christian:

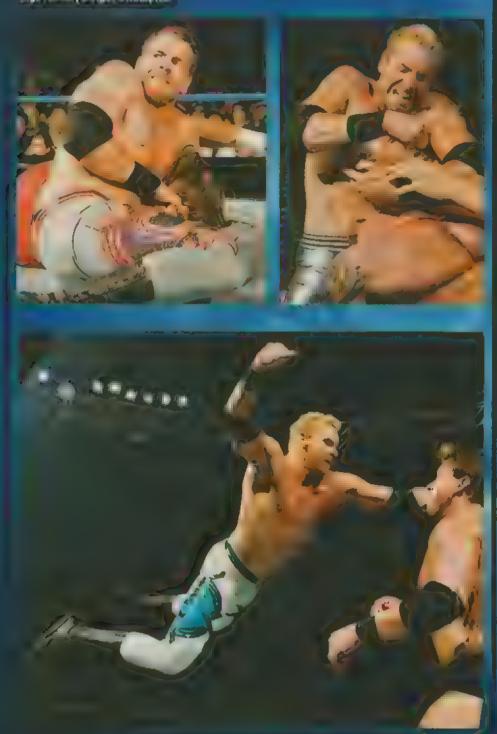
reight: C'Y"

From: Toronto, Onlario WWE Debut 1998

Career Highlights:

Weight: 215 lbs.
Also Known As: "Captain Charisma"
Finishing Move: Unprettier

3 time Intercontinental Champion, 9 time World Tag Team Champion.
Light Reavyweight Champion







Randy Orton: Meight: 6'6' Weight: 245 ibs. From: St. Louis; Missouri WWE Debut: 2002 Finisher: RKO Gareer Nighlights: World Heavyweight Champion, Intersontinental Champion





Chris Beneit:

Leight: 5'10"

From: Atlanta, Georgia WWE Debut: 2000 Garcer Highlights: 4

weight: 220 He

Also Known As: The Crappler, The Rabid Wolverine Finishing Maye, Erippler Crosstacs

World Heavyweight Champion, WWE Tag Team Champion, 2-time World Tag Team Champion, 4-time Intersoutinental Champion, 3-time WCW Tag Team Champion, 3-time WCW TV Champion 2004 Royal Rumble winner





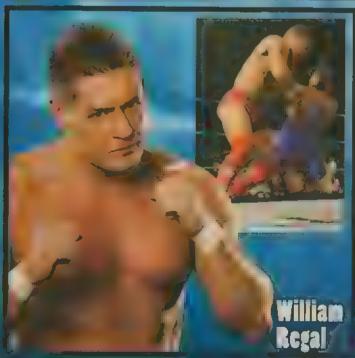


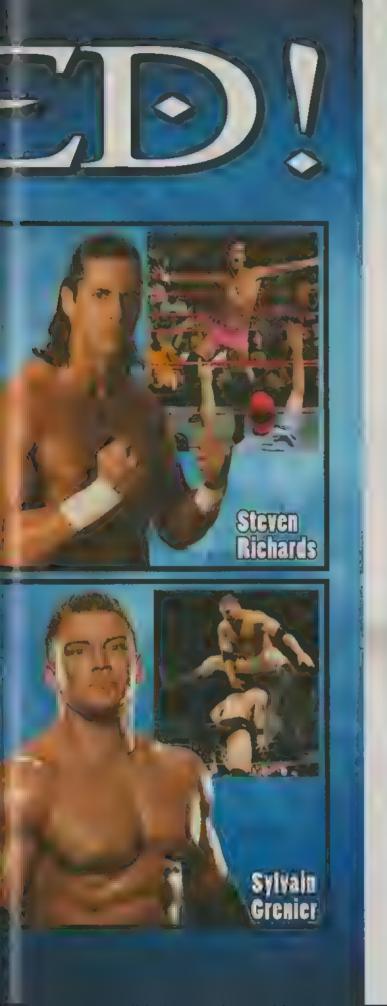
On the last night of the draft, the GMs of both Raw and SmackDown! orchestrated an lith-hour trade. Here's a look at the remaining Superstars to join the SmackDown! Team



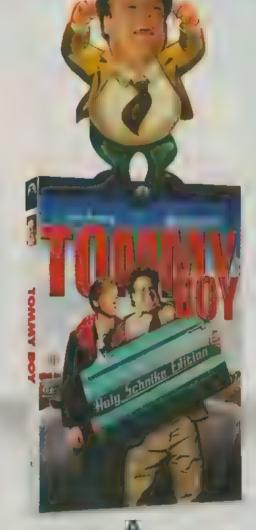
Candice Michele







GOLY SCHMAE



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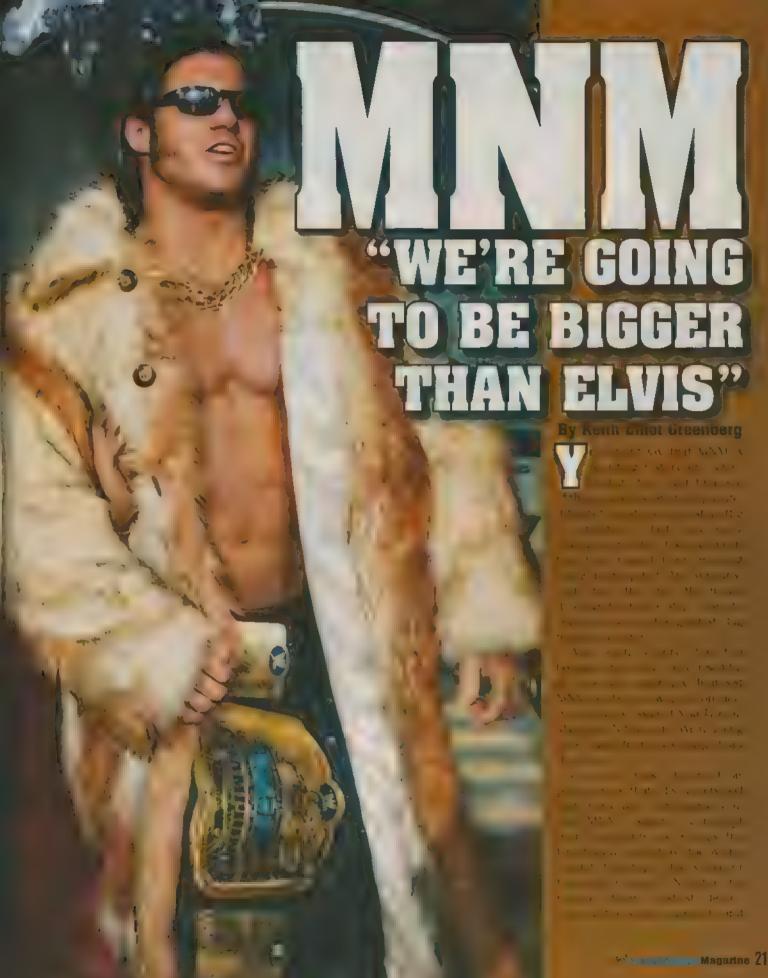
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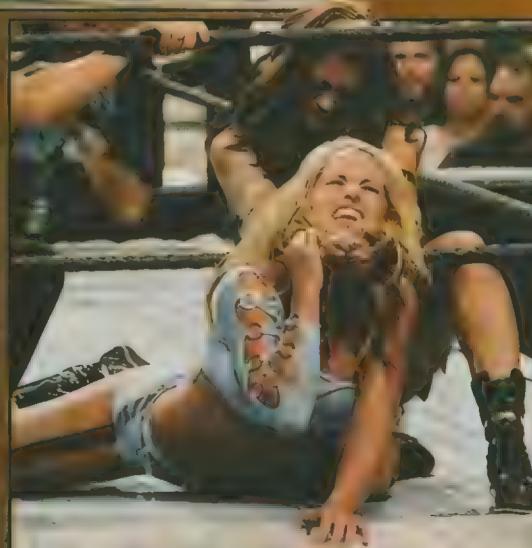




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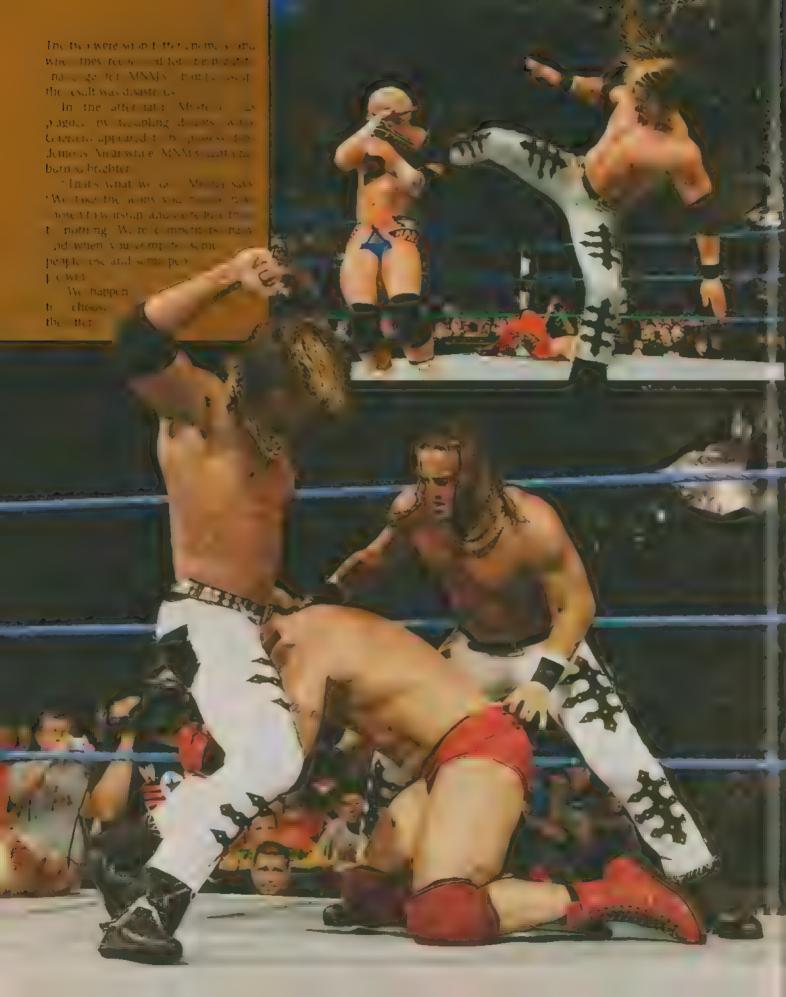
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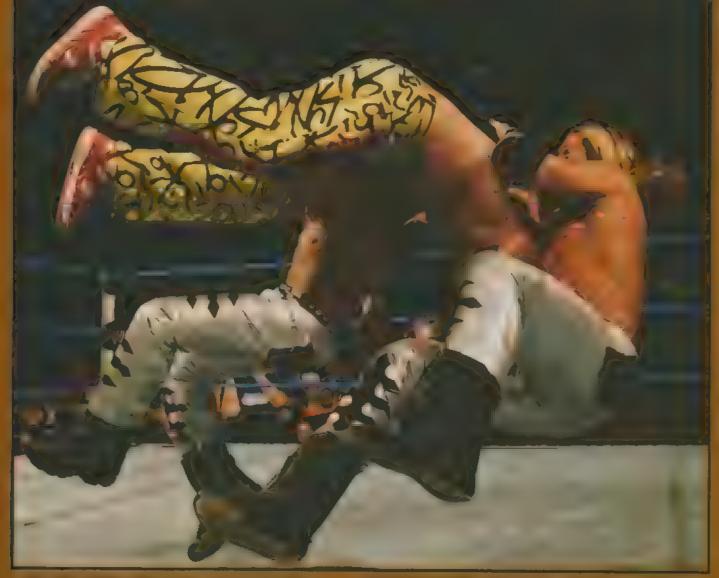
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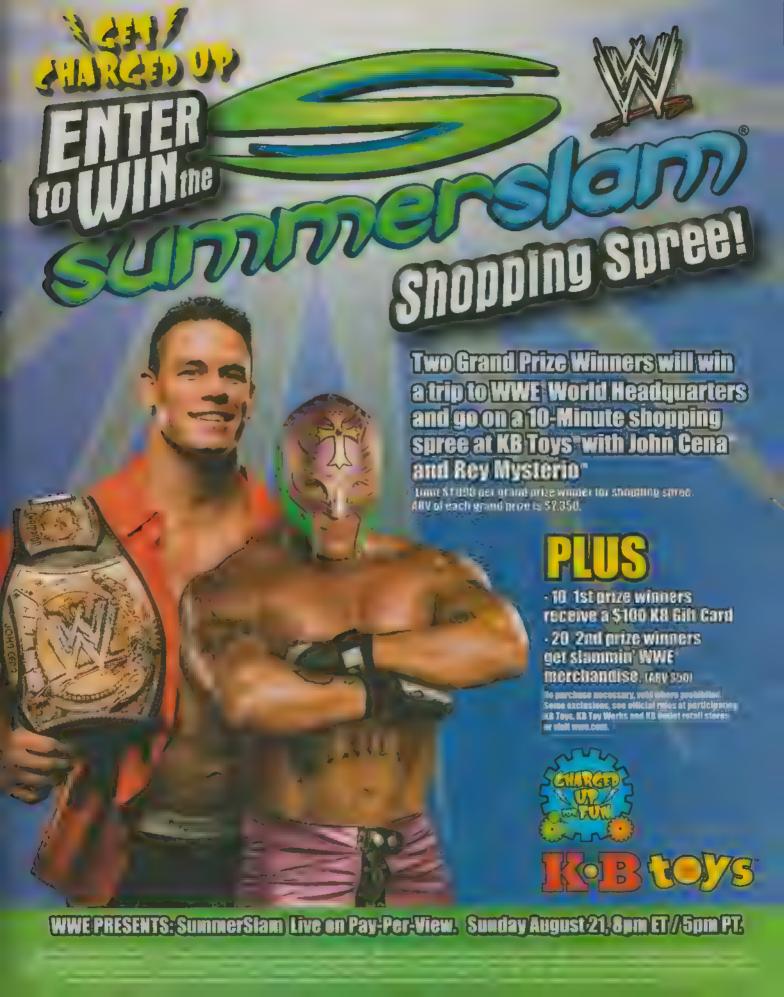
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It san attitude MNM carries on the red carpet and, as the results nave shown into the





ach summer in WWE, it comes down to one explosive event the night in which scores are seried and history is made. Since 1988, that event has been SummerSiam:

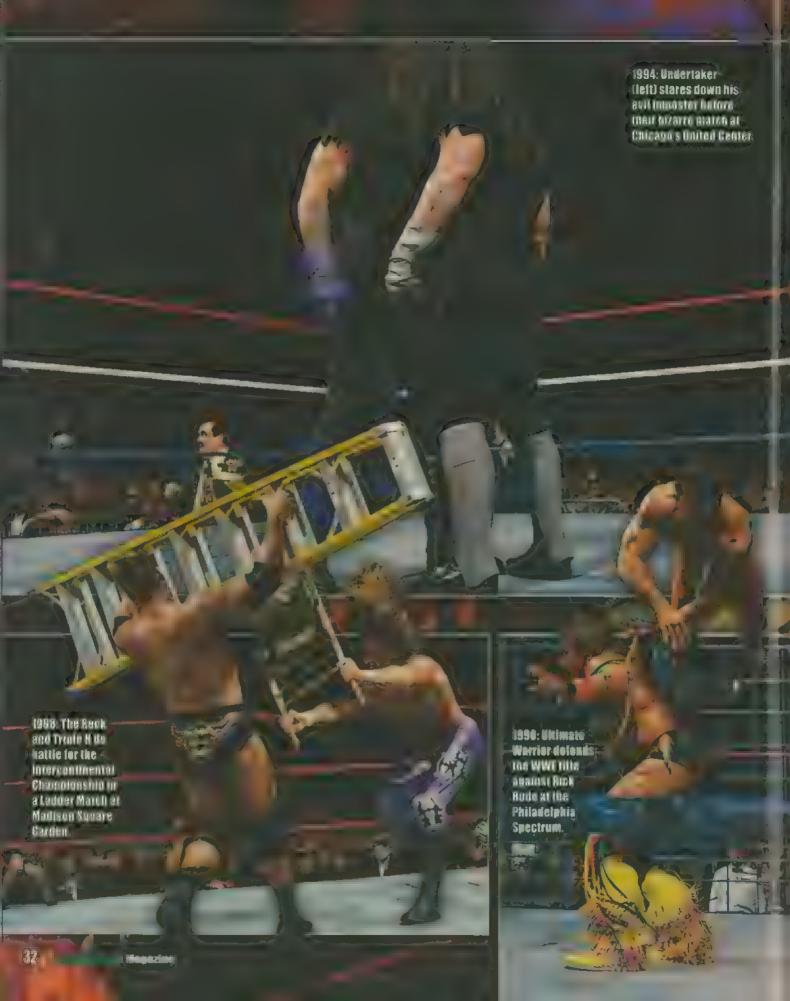
And in the years since WWt has been transformed into two distinct brands, SummerStambas taken on a greater significance than ever before There are only tour pights each year in which the Superstars of Raw and SmackDown! compete at the same event. SummerStam is one of those nights.

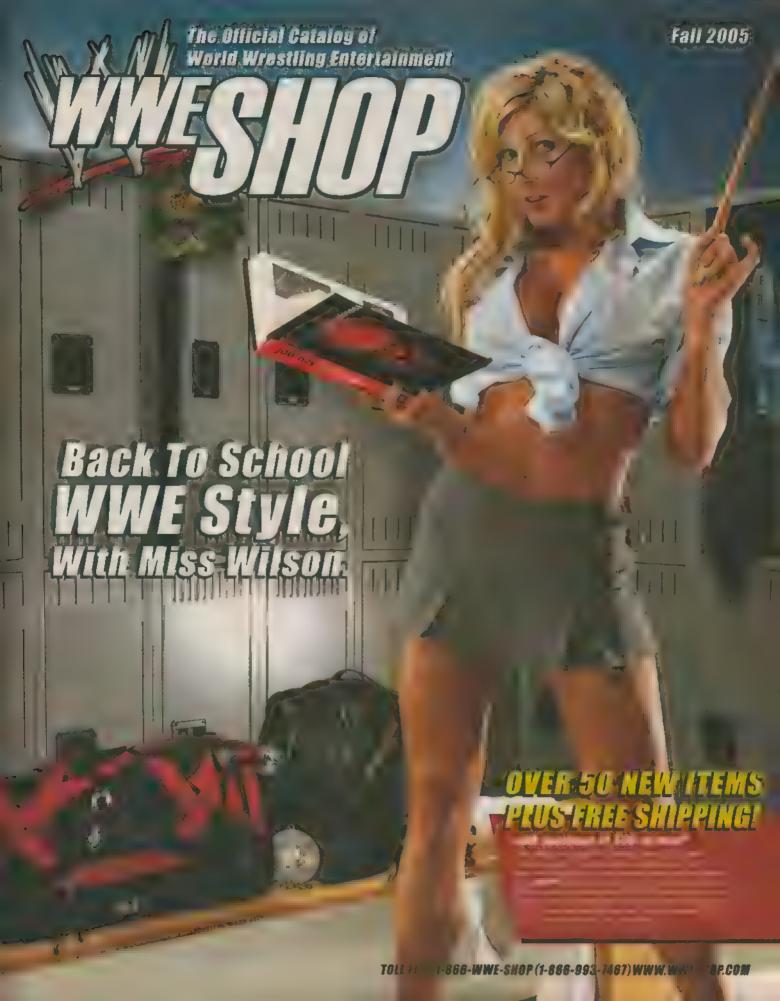
So many at WWF s most memorable moments have taken place at SummerSlam. Perhaps that its why many fans refer to as "the WrestleMania of summer." Fans wait the entire season each year to witness the excitement that SummerSlam offers.

It's the kind of exchement that can only be done proper justice through pictures—which is only we have assembled some of the greatest SummerSlam photos from over the years. These pictures represent the heart and soul of SummerSlam, the efforts of some of the finest athletes to ever set loot in a ring.

So, as we all wait with baited breath for the tatest and perhaps greatest, installment of this annual WWF extravaganza, leas take some time to look track on some of the moments may remain us exactly why SummerSlam is something worth waiting for

1852 Bret Wit Own' North Diana Barr-Smith and Davey Boy Smith colobrate after Bret and Davey Boy's classic Intercontinental Championship match at Wembley Stadium Magazine 31









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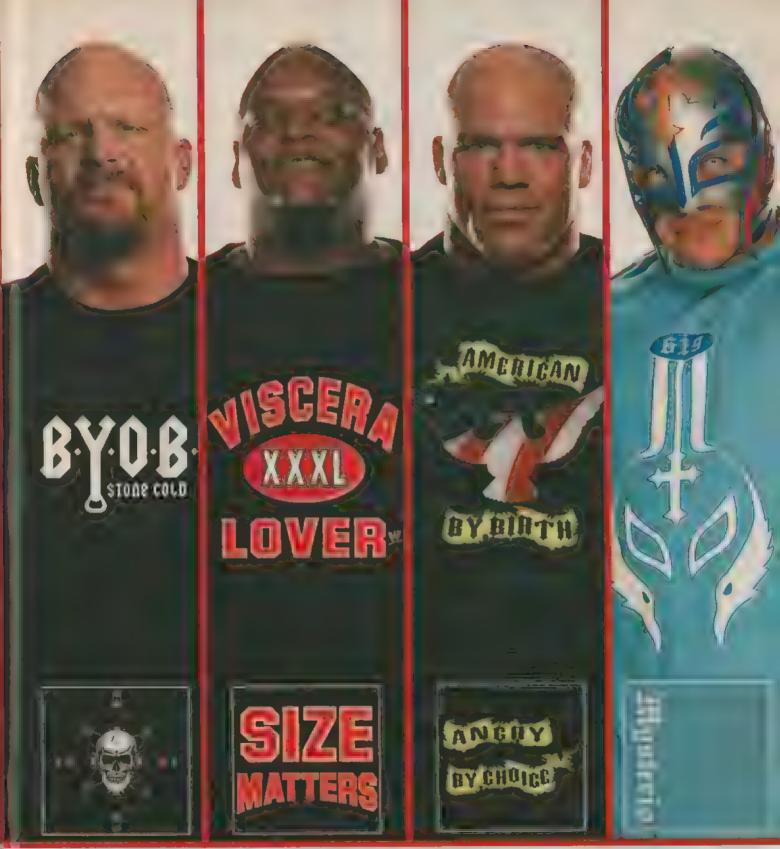
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"Also available in Youth (M, L)" #09026 \$22.00



Stone Cold Steve Austin "BYOB" T-shirt Black, 100% cotton, Screen-printed

in the USA. Imported. Sizes. M L XL XXL

#13333

\$25.00

Viscera" "XXXL Lover" T-shirt

Black, 100% cotton, Screen-printed in the USA. imported.

Sizes: M L XE XXL XXXL #92002

XXXL

\$25.00 \$28.00

NEW! Kurt Angle™ "American By Birth" T-shirt

Black, 100% cotton. Screen-printed in the USA. Imported Sizes. M. L. XI. XXL

\$25.00

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Rey Mysterio" **Light Blue T-shirt**

Light blue, 100% cotton. Screen-printed in the USA. Imported. Sizes: S M L XL XXL #96102 \$25.00

"Also available in Youth (M, L)" #96111 \$2

\$22.00





W. Divas Posters 24" x 36" \$10.00 each

A. NEW! Torrie Wilson™ #88114

#88099 B. Candice Michelle™

C. Stacy Kelbler™ #88098

D. Trish Stratus" #88112

E. Maria Kaneliis™ #88102

F. Christy Hemme™ #88100

G. NEW! Victoria™ #88120

H. ₩. Divas "Vivas Las Divas of the WWE" 2005 Video

Approx. 1 hour, 20 minutes YHS \$9.95

#88106

DVD Approx. 3 hours

\$17.76 #88105

I. NEW! Stacy Keibler™ Growth Chart 36 x 75 inches tall. Hang up this life-sized poster on your wall and see how you measure up to Stacy Keibler. #88118 \$20.00

J. W Divas Wastebasket Tin-ploted steel, 15 inches tall, 10.5 inches in diameter and tapered. #88108 \$20.00





A. NEW! Hulk Hogan" **Red Bandana**

100% polyester. 21" x 21". Imported. #91275 \$8.00

B. NEW! Hulk Hogan™ Yellow Bandana

100% polyester, 21" x 21". Imported. \$8.00 #91276

C. NEW! Hulk Hogan™ Baseball Cap

Red. 100% heavyweight cotton twill. Structured. Adjustable Veloro dosure, Embroidered logos, Imported. \$20.00 #91283

D. NEW! Hulk Hogan™ Sweatshirt

Red. 90% cotton/10% polyester. Silk-screened in the USA. Imported. Sizes: S.M.L.XL.XXL.XXXI.

\$40.00 #91286 \$45.00 XXXL

E. NEW! Hulk Hogan" Lanyard

Red. 4" W x 20" L. Hylon. Swivel dip. Imported.

#91280 \$5.00

F. Hulk Hogan"

"Addicted Since" T-shirt

Red. 100% cotton. Screen-printed in the USA. Imported. Sizes: S.M.L.XILXXL XXXL

#91285 \$25.00 \$28.00 XXXL

G. NEW! Hulk Hogan™ Pillow

Red. 18" square, Catton/polyester. Screen-printed logo. Domestic. \$20.00

#91287

H. Hulk Hogan™

"Hulkamania Forever" T-shirt

Yellow, 100% cotton, Silk-screened in the USA, Imported.

Sizes. M.L.XL.XXL

#91274 \$25.00

I. NEW! Hulk Hogan™ Bracelet

Silicone. Red/yellow Ne-dye. One size fits most. #91279 \$3.00

J. NEW! Hulk Hogan" Wastebasket

Tin-plated steel, 15" tall / 10.5" in diameter and tapered. Imported.

#91284 \$20.00

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All fit up to a 46" waist. Approx. 5 lbs. Simulated leather Each come with a cloth carry bag A. W World Heavyweight Replica Belt Measures 4' 8" in length. #00677 \$225.00 ₩ World Heavyweight Kids Replica Belt Fits up to a 34" waist. Comes with a cloth carry bog. #00851 B. W. Championship Replica Belt Measures 4' 8" in length. Medaltions are ornamented by TO simulated diamonds. #00582 \$239.00 K Championship Kids Replica Belt Fits up to a 34" waist. Comes with a clath corry bag. \$109,00 C. NEW! W. Zipper Pull Mickel, 7/8" x 7/8". Attach to your zippers on jackets, bogs and more. #W00010 D. NEW! W. Superstars Wastebasket Fin-plated steel, 15" toll, 10.5" in diameter and tapered. \$20.00 #W00011 E. NEW! W. Raw* SmackDown!* Lanyard Block, 20° L. Mylon, Screen-printed logos, Swivel dip. Imported. #\\/00004 \$5.00 F. NEW! W. Camp Chair 600D x 300D mylon. Embroidered WWE logo on back of chair. Cup holder on armrest. 2100 mylan carrying case with shoulder strap. Weight limit 250 lbs. Imported. #00972 \$35.00 G. W WrestleMania* 21 DVD DVD - 3-Disc set. Approx. 7 hrs \$21.21 * 💆 WrestleMania® 21 DVD & Program Package #00986 \$24.99 H. NEW! Kane™ Journey Into Darkness Book Paperback. #44034 I. NEW! William Regal™ Walking the Golden Mile Book Poperbook, US version #07005 \$17.76 1. W Judgment Day* DVD Approx. 3 hours #W00001 K. W. The Greatest Wrestling Stars Of The 80's DVD Run time approx. 8.5 hours L. W. ECW One Night Stand DVD Approx. 3 hours, 15 minutes \$17.12 #00983 M. NEW! W. Vengeonce* DVD Approx. 3 hours, 15 minutes \$17.47 N. NEW! W. Camouffage Baseball Cap Comoeflage. 100% brushed cotton twill. Structured, Embroidered logos, Imported. #W00017 520.00 O. NEW! W Logo Poly-Dri Shirts Block, navy, silver grey or white. 100% polyester microfiber knit fabric. Embroidered logo, Imported. \$35.00 each Black #W00016 Navv #W00020

White #W00021

Silver grey #W00019











A. NEW! Undertaker® Pillow

Block. 18" square. Cottan/polyester. Screen-printed logo.

#03162

\$35.00

B. Undertaker® Wastebasket

Tin-plated steel, 15" inches tall, 10.5" inches in diameter in diameter and tapered.

#03156

\$20.00

C. Undertaker® Replica Hat

Solid pressed felt. Will fit up to a 730th head, Imported.

#03153

\$25.00

D. NEW! Undertaker® Blanket

50"x60", 85% acrylic/15% polyester. Super soft blanket with woven-in logos. Domestic.

#03162

\$35.00

E. NEW! Batista" "Is Unleashed" T-shirt

Block, 100% cotton, Screen-printed in the USA, Imported.

Sizes: M.L.XL XXL XXXL

#37024

\$25.00

XXXL \$28.00 F. Batista''' Cut-Off Baseball Jersey

Marcon. 100% polyester oir mesh. Screen-printed logos.

#37019

\$45.00

G. NEW! Undertaker® Zipper Pull

Nickel. 7/8" x 7/8". Attach to your zippers on jackets, bags and more.

#03158

\$3.00

H. NEW! The Hurricane™

Zipper Pull

Nickel. 7/8" x 7/8". Attach to your zippers on jackets, bass and more.

#09023

\$3.00

I. NEW! Undertaker* Bracelet

Purple. Silicone. One size fits most.

#03157

\$3.00

I. NEW! Batista" Bracelet

Moroon, Silicone One size fits most.

#37022

\$3.00

K. Kane" T-shirt

Black, 100% cotton, Screen-printed in the USA, Imported.
Sizes: M.L.XI, XXI, XXXI.

#44035

\$25.00

XXXL

\$28.00

L. NEW! Batista[™] Bobblehead

The coolest addition for bookshelves or desks, work or home. Poly-resin, 8"H x 3"W.

#37008

\$15.00

M. Batista[™] Plush Bear

17" tall. Cotton, polyester and nylon. Imported.

#37010

\$20.00

N. NEW! Big Show" Plush Bear

20" tall. Cotton, polyester and nylon. Imported.

#70015

\$20.00

O. Ric Flair™ Plush Bear

17" tall. Cotton, polyester and nylon. Imported.

#95011

\$20.00





A. NEW! Rey Mysterio" Football Jersey

Black / Blue, 100% Polyester dazzle and air mesh, Knit-waven label on front lower left of jersey, Screen-printed logos, Emported. Sizes: S.M.L.XIL.XXIL.XXXIL

#96117 \$45.00

XXXL \$48.00

B. Rey Mysterio™ Mask T-shirt

Block, 100% cotton, Screen-printed in the USA.

Imported. Sizes: S M 1 XIL XXI.

\$25.00

"Also crailable in Youth (M, L)"

#96110 \$22.00

C. NEW! Rey Mysterio™ **Black Hooded Towel**

Block. Terry doth. Embroidered logos on front, back and both flaps. Inner Yelcro pocket to store keys, money etc. Imported.

#96095 \$20.00 #96109(youth) \$18.00

D. Rey Mysterio™ Mask Pendant

Silvertone, 28" long link chain, lobster back closure. Three-dimensional mask measures 1344"H x 1444W. \$10.00

E. NEW! Rey Mysterio" Zipper Pull

Nickel. 7/8" diameter. Attach to your zippers on jackets, bogs and more.

90.62 F. NEW! Rey Mysterio™ Pillow

Light blue. 18" square. Cotton/polyester. Screen-printed logo, Domestic.

\$20.00

G. NEW! Rey Mysterio™ Lanyard

Black, 20" L. Hylon, Screen-printed logos, Swivel clip. \$5.00

H. NEW! Rey Mysterio™ Bracelet

Black. Silicone One size fits most. #96100

I. Rey Mysterio" Foam Belt

Four with molded plastic plates. 41° long, Center plate is 6.5" tall. Belt fastens with Velcro.

\$3.00

#96091 516.00

J. Rey Mysterio™ Blue Plastic Mask

Plastic. One size fits all. Bock has two elastic bands. \$8.00

*Rey Mysterio™ Foam Belt and Blue Plastic Mask Package

\$19.99

K. Rey Mysterio" Maroon Plastic Mask

Plostic. One size fits all. Back has two elastic bands.

L. NEW! Rey Mysterio" Blanket

50"x60" 85% acrylic / 15% polyester. Super soft blanket with waven-in logos. Damestic.

M. Rey Mysterio" Wristband Set

Light blue. Terry/cotton/polyester. Set of two 220th wristbands. Embroidered logos. One size fits most. Imported.

N. Rey Mysterio™ Baseball Cap Black with red stitching, 100% Heavyweight cotton twill. Structured, Embroidered logos, Adjustable Velcro closure, Imported. \$20.00











NEW! Sack packs
Block. 4200 Rip-step nylon. 19.5" x 13" x 12". Very large
and good quality backpack. Front packet has deluxe
organizer. Small front zipper packet. Op player /
MP3 player / IPOD player packet with earphone hole.
Two large enoin compartments for books or lapton, Side
compression straps. Right-side mesh water battle packet.
Custwoned shoulder straps.

\$40.00 each

A. John Cena"

#06090

B. Rey Mysterio™

#96115

C. WWE

#W00014

D. W. 12-Pack Cooler Bag Block/Red. 420D mylon. 12.75" L x 9" H x 8" W. Embroidered WWE lago on front Front packet and side mesh pockets. Adjustable shoulder strap. Waterproof.

Imported. #00957

\$18.00

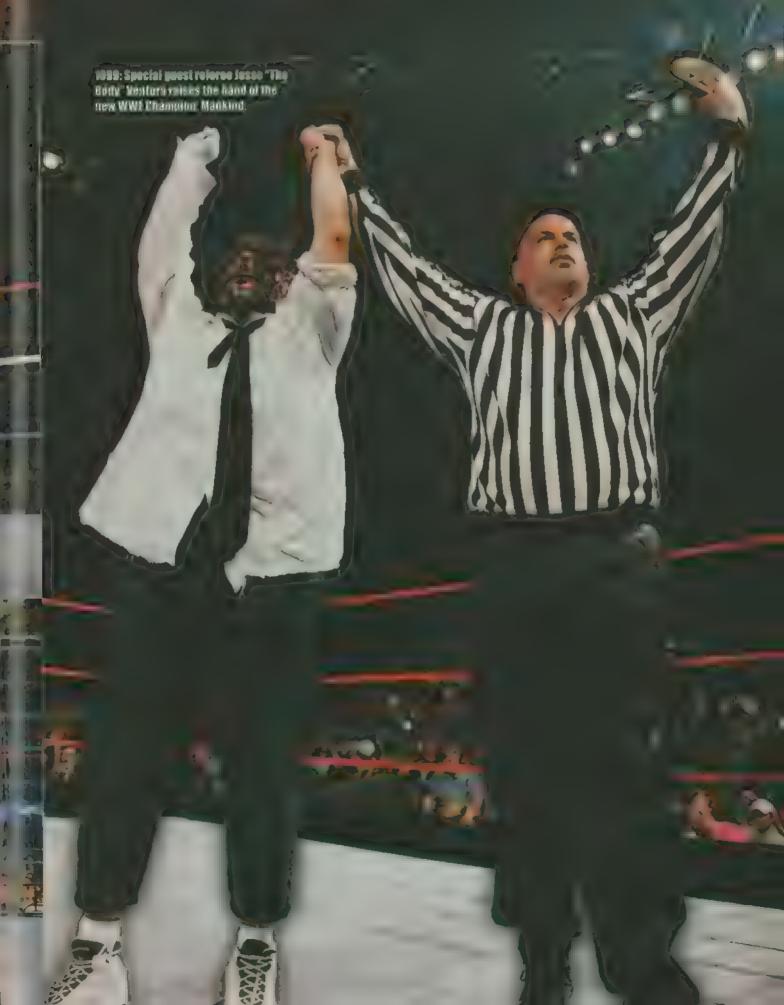
E. W. Gymn Bag Block/Red. 420D nylon. 23.5° L x 12° H x 10° W. Embroidered WWE logo on front. Front gusset pocket and U-shaped top entry opening. Zippered pockets on both ends. Yelcro handle grip and padded shoulder strap.

#00946

530.00

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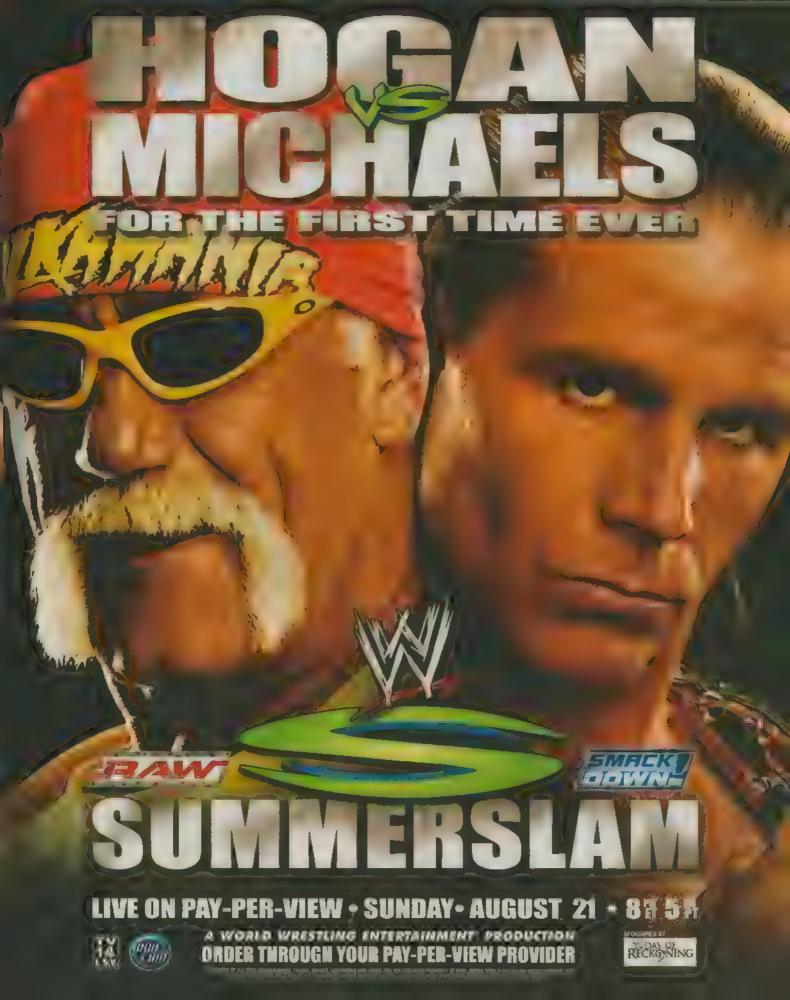
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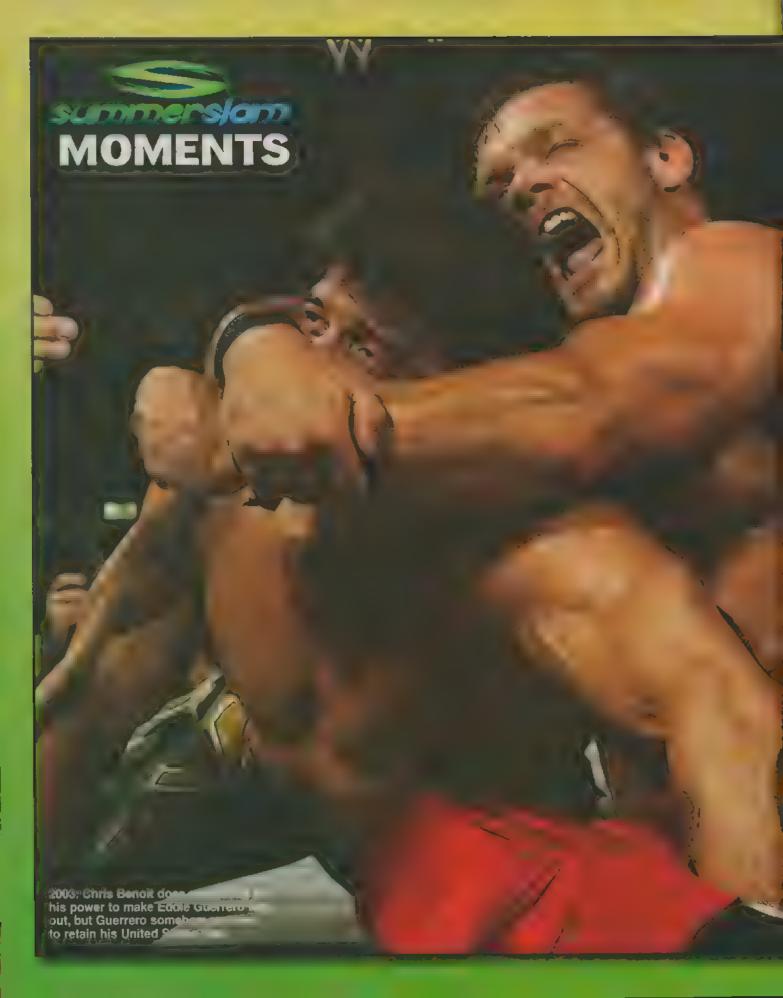


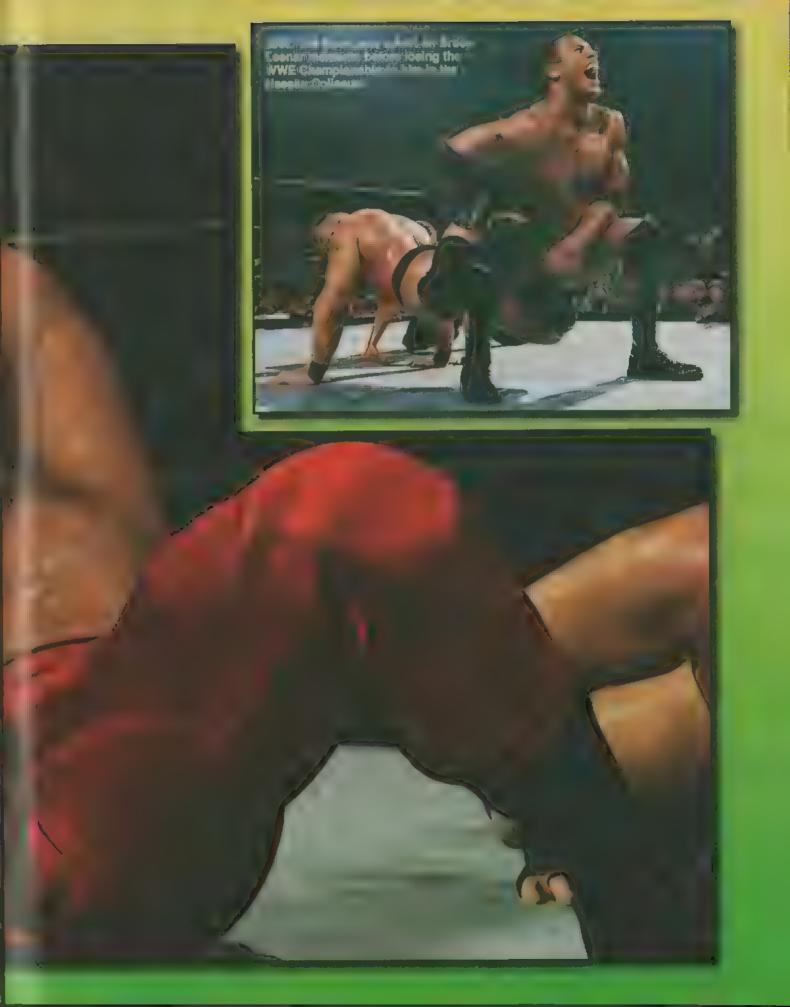


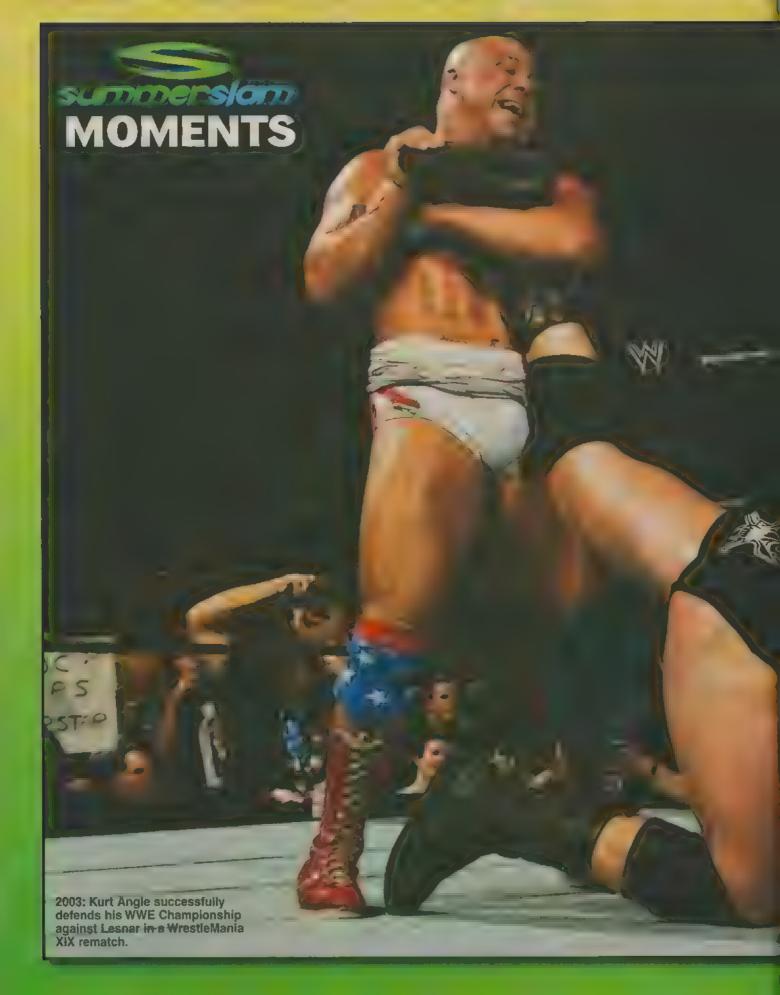






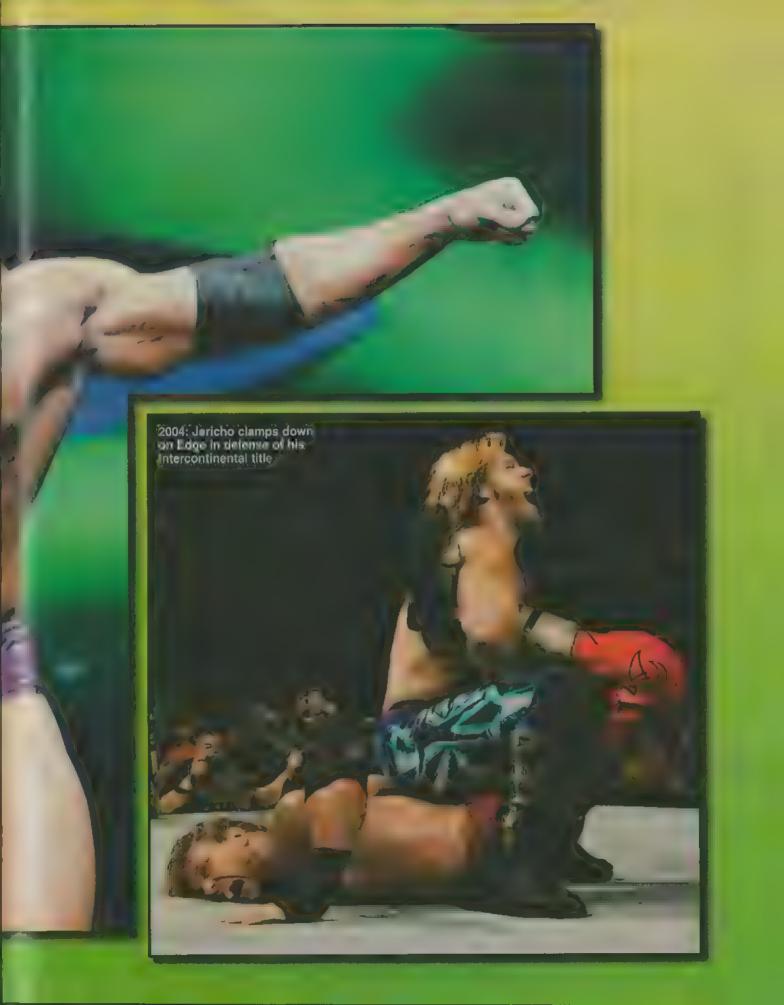


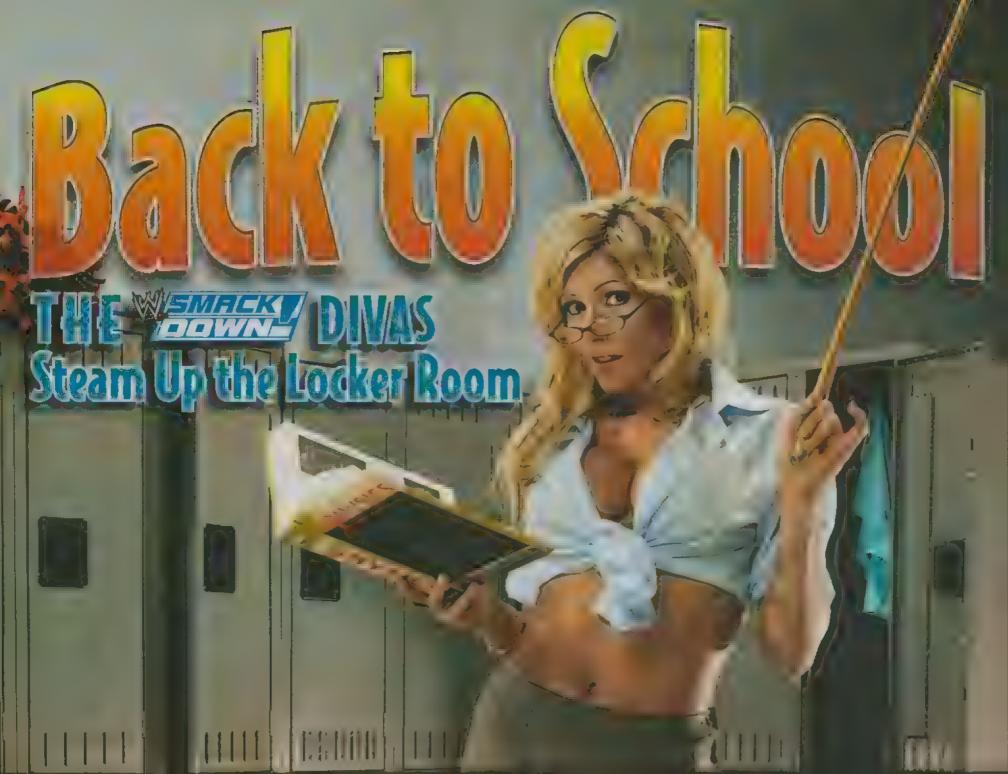






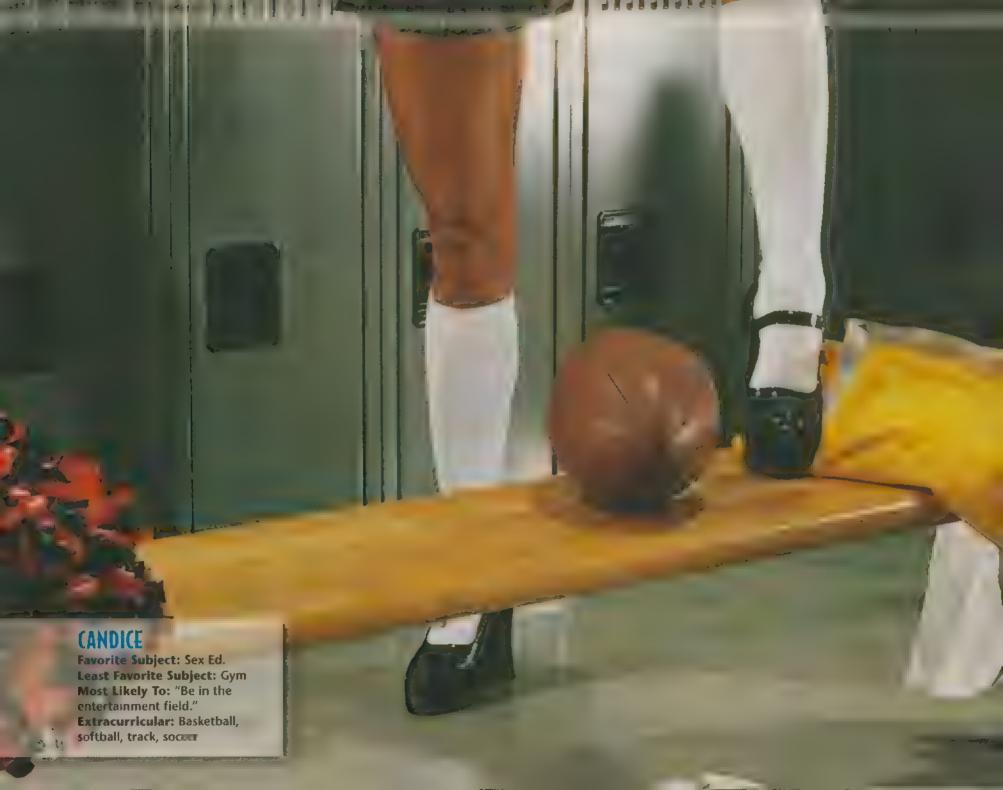




















The Life & Times of Williams o



Every month since the early 1960s, fans at Madison Square Garden had been faithfully frequenting the "World's Most Famous Arena" to cheer Bruno Sammartino to victory. And although the Italian strongman had been in his share of sticky situations, he'd always found a way to rally back for the victory.

But for some reason, the night of April 26, 1976 seemed different.

As his challenger that evening, 322-pound Texan, Stan "The Lariat" Hansen scooped Sammartino up and slammed him to the mat, the fans heard a loud snap. That sound was Bruno's neck breaking.

Fueled by adrenaline, Sammartino continued to wrestle for a few more minutes before the referee—concerned for Bruno's health—stopped the match. As the decision was rendered, Bruno collapsed from the pain and was rushed away from the Garden in an ambulance.



After an injury of this magnitude, most men would have considered hanging up the boots and seeking a new occupation. In fact, that's exactly what Bruno's doctors advised him to do. But Sammartino would not heed their advice.

Less than two months after having his neck broken, he returned to action at Shea Stadium. That night, Bruno gave Hansen such a severe beating that the Texan ran from the ring and lost the contest via countout. Following several tag team matches against Hansen, Sammartino finally got "The Lariat" one-on-one in a Steel Cage Match at MSG, where he evened the score and showed the world that he was back.

For Sammartino, struggles such as these were par for the course. Hoping to make enough money to move his family to the U.S. and give them a better life, Bruno's father left their native Pizzoferrato, Abruzzi, Italy for the United States shortly

(Above Left) Bruno demonstrates his patented Bear Hug submission. (Above) Sammartino delivers a stunning right hand to "Superstar" Billy Graham's jaw. (Right) Bruno in a familiar pose as champ.

after Bruno was born on October 6, 1935. World War II started in 1939, and all passages between Italy and America were soon closed.

Despite having a strong mother to raise him, Bruno faced severe poverty and even hostility from invading German troops before he finally made it to the U.S. at age 14. It wasn't long after he arrived that Bruno, who now resided in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, developed an interest in powerlifting. Within a few years, he went from an 85-pound kid to 250-pound man.

In 1959, Sammartino began his wrestling career, and just four years later, he was on top. On May 17, 1963, he defeated

the first WWE Champion, "Nature Boy" Buddy Rogers, with a bear hug in just 48 seconds. He'd go on to hold the prestigious title for nearly eight years—the longest reign in history.

For wrestling fans in the Northeast, Sammartino became more than just a champion. He was a role model for children, a hero for all people of European descent, and a living, breathing American success story. During the course of his historic title reign, Bruno managed to garner more fan support than any Italian sports icon since New York Yankee Joe DiMaggio. When he stepped in the ring against an opponent, they not only became his enemy, they became the enemy of every person inside the arena.

Two of Sammartino's most legendary foes were "Classy" Freddie Blassie and "The Spaniard" Crusher Verdu. During June 1964, in front of more than 12,000 fans inside Roosevelt Stadium in Jersey City, New Jersey, Blassie picked up a rare victory over Sammartino by countout. The next month they met again, this time in front of a sellout crowd at MSG, and again, Blassie was victorious, this time by DQ. But the Garden crowd finally got their revenge in early August, when Bruno pinned the "Hollywood Fashion Plate."





(Left) Bruno gives WWE Champion Pedro Morales his ringing endorsement. (Below) Sammartino pauses his workout to pose in front of a mirror. defeated Stan Stasiak and began another historic three-and-a-half year reign as WWE Champion. It was during this time that Bruno tangled with Hansen, Killer Kowalski, Ken Patera and "Superstar" Billy Graham.

In April '77, Graham managed to

Another rare Sammartino loss was against Verdu, who picked up a victory over Bruno at MSG in June 1970, when the referee stopped the contest due to a cut over Bruno's eye, but Sammartino retained the title. Despite the fact that WWE was temporarily off weekly television at the time, both this match and the rematch in July attracted the Garden's two biggest crowds in over a decade.

During his years on top, Sammartino clashed with many of the industry's other top stars, including Gorilla Monsoon, Waldo Von Erich and Haystacks Calhoun. Astonishingly, during a match against the 601-pound Calhoun, Bruno actually slammed the gargantuan—a feat that had never before been accomplished.

On January 18, 1971, the unthinkable happened. During a match against "The Russian Bear" Ivan Koloff, Sammartino was struck with a flying knee off of the top rope, and was pinned. Just like that, his seven-and-a-half-year championship run was over, but not for long.

Less than two years later, Bruno



wrest the title away from Sammartino in Baltimore, Maryland, Throughout that summer, Bruno feverishly attempted to regain the crown, but he was unable to pin the flambovant Graham's shoulders to the mat. And although he finally picked up a victory over Graham in front of a sellout crowd at The Spectrum in Philadelphia after the referee stopped the contest due to blood, Bruno was never able to regain the title.

Over the next few years, Bruno began to mentor Larry Zbyszko as his protégé. At first, it seemed as though Sammartino was preparing the young athlete to be his eventual successor. Instead of biding his time and learning all that he could, however, Zbyszko viciously turned on Bruno in a bloody televised match.

On August 9, 1980, at an event billed as the Showdown at Shea, Bruno defeated Zbyszko in a legendary Steel Cage Match, which proved once and for all that experience can overcome youth.

Even as he approached his 50th birthday, Sammartino continued to wrestle intermittently and took a position as a broadcaster for WWE. Throughout the early '80s, Bruno clashed with future Hall of Farners "Rowdy" Roddy Piper, "Mr. Wonderful" Paul Orndorff and "Cowboy" Bob Orton. In one of his final WWE appearances, Bruno competed in the 20-man invitational Battle Royal at WrestleMania 2, where he tossed out former WWE Champion Iron Sheik before being eliminated by Big John Studd.

In 1987, Bruno, feeling that he'd accomplished everything there is to accomplish in sports-entertainment, officially retired from the ring. But nearly two decades later, people still reminisce about him and his amazing accomplishments.

Altogether, Sammartino held the WWE Championship for nearly 11 years. He headlined Madison Square Garden 211 times, 187 of which were sellout crowds-a record that will likely never be approached. Aside from his amazing accolades, Sammartino is credited as the man who helped put WWE on the map during its territorial days as the World Wide Wrestling Federation, and paved the way for the Superstars of the '80s, '90s and beyond.



WWE 24/7 will be airing a classic special program on Bruno Sammartino duning the month of August. Don't have WWE 24/7? It's only available on digital cable, so call your local cable operator and demand WWE 24/7, or log on to 24-7.wwe.com for more details

(Above) Sammartino celebrates his first WWE Championship victory after defeating "Nature Boy" Buddy Rogers in just 48 seconds in May 1963. He'd hold the title until January 1971.

[Editor's Note: We apologize for the absence of Heidenreich's column from last month's issue. Unfortunately, the "disasterpiece" he submitted was considered too extreme for general consumption. This month, Heidenreich seems to have gotten his creative process under control again (under control for Heidenreich, that is), and so we are able to present his latest "disasterpiece."]

Wrestling for Friends

ver since Booker T gave me that chair shot a few months back, I have seen things in a new light. It is almost like I have moved from the dark side to the light side. Instead of viewing the glass as half-empty, I now view it as half-full.

Someone once told Heidenreich that perception is everything. I think, therefore I am-Heidenreich thinks he is good, therefore he is good. It is hard to believe that getting hit with a chair could do so much good for someone.

Generally, people view getting hit with a chair as a bad thing. I perceive it as good. Therefore, it is good for me!

A chair shot took the most vicious competitor on SmackDown! and made him likeable—hell, I may be lovable!

I don't know about that, Heidenreich. Don't push your luck. You still are a few cards short of a full deck.

Don't tell me who or what I am! Back to the story. Heidenreich! OK, OK, the magic chair shot, right!

I had to thank Booker T, because he saved my life. I was so full of anger and rage. I was headed down a dead-end road, going nowhere fast. I was so out of control. I needed to be institutionalized. It's hard to believe all the innocent victims I attacked for no rhyme or reason. That sure is a funny word, rhyme...

After all these years of running off the rails on a crazy train, my life is finally starting to come together. People actually allow their kids within 50 feet of me. I can honestly say I have

changed for the better. I feel good about myself. Heidenreich is ready to accept his role as a positive influence in the world.

It seems like yesteronly day that I was escorted to the ring in a strait jacket. What has happened to Heidenreich is almost like a miracle. I am a writer, not a fighter.

What the devil are you talkina about. Heidenreich? You have gone completely mad! Heidenreich loves to fight!

> No. he doesn't! Yes, he does! Shut up!

Wow, it's hard dealing with me. Where was I before I interrupted myself? Oh yes, I was talking about fighting. I was fighting a losing battle within myself, against the demons that have haunted me for a long time.

Those demons have been put to rest. Buried. I am a free man. I had been a slave to my own anger and rage. Now Heidenreich can focus his energy friends all over the world and gaining a championship for Heidenreich and all his friends.

Without my friends, I would not be where I am today. I now can write poems about my gains, instead of all my pain. It seems like it has taken a lifetime, but I think the world is finally starting to understand Heidenreich. All Heidenreich ever wanted was to be accepted for who he was and what he stood for.

I want to thank everyone for the second chance to show I'm not a bad person. I was just misunderstood. 🔳



journeyintodarkness

AWARNING

Contents may be hazardous to your sleep.



NOW AVAILABLE

The gripping tale of Kane's life, at a bookstore near you. a novel by michaelchiappetta



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Enjoy an unprecedented look at the career of one of WWE's all-time greats with this astounding 3-disc DVD set.

'The Phenom's' Greatest Hits

Available August 23 Suggested Retail Price: \$21,99

If you're a die-hard fan of Undertaker—and who isn't?—then the weren't enough, the collection is packed latest release from WWE Home Video is exactly what you've been waiting for. Tombstone: The History of the Undertaker is the definitive DVD collection covering the incredible career of this bona fide WWE legend.

takes you through 'Taker's entire 15-year stay in WWE, telling his amazing story via the matches that helped make him famous. All the milestone encounters of "the Deadman's" career are here.

Relive the night he first captured the WWE Championship from Hulk Hogan at the 1991 Survivor Series. Stand with him as struggles with Mankind in the first-ever Buried Alive match. Witness the pure devastation of his Hell in a Cell matches with Shawn Michaels and Mankind.

Tombstone covers every major battle of Undertaker's history-making wars with the likes of The Rock, Stone Cold Steve Austin, and of course, his half-brother Kane. From his early days, to the Corporate Ministry, to the American Bad Ass, right up to his return to the Dark Side—it's all here.

There are also countless other clips from throughout Undertaker's reign of terrormoments that are indelibly branded into the hearts and minds of any true "Deadman" fan. And if you are a more recent fan of WWE and Undertaker, then this will fill you in on everything you've missed up until now. It is the ultimate career history of the man whose WWE career has lasted longer Andre the Giant.

And as if the matches on this set with a variety of extras spanning the years. Who can forget when Undertaker constructed the massive casket he intended for the 600-pound Yokozuna? Or the night Kane shamelessly desecrated the graves of 'Taker's parents? Spanning three discs, Tombstone How about when Undertaker barged into Paul Bearer's home during an interview and accosted his former manager? All that and more can be found in Tombstone.

> There are even very rare Undertaker matches, such as "the Phenom's" 1997 encounter with Bret "Hit Man" Hart from

without interruption than anyone's since Kingdom pay-per-view. Even if you're that hardcore Creature of the Night who thinks they've seen everything, you're bound to find several classic gems here.

Simply put, no Undertaker fan should be without Tombstone: The History of the Undertaker. In Undertaker's years in WWE, no video release of this scale has ever been attempted. As WWE fans have already learned over the past few years with releases like The Ultimate Ric Flair Collection and The Rise + Fall of ECW. DVD technology has made possible the kinds of compilations that previously existed only as fantasy wish-lists. Add Tombstone to the list of WWE Home Video classics.

- Brian Solomon



WWE MOBILE

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Road Warrior Hawk—one half of the legendary Legion of Doom—has his classic makeup applied on the set of a 1991 cereal advertisement. At the time, Hawk and his partner Animal were enjoying their first history-making reign as WWE World Tag Team Champions.